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UNCLAS LILONGWE 000634

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/S, INR/AA
MCC FOR KEVIN SABA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/25/2015

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [TBIO](#) [MI](#)

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT ADJOURNS; IMPEACHMENT MOTIONS PUT OFF

REF: A. LILONGWE 508

[B](#). LILONGWE 614

[C](#). LILONGWE 540

[1](#)1. SUMMARY: (U) Parliament adjourned Thursday July 22 after passing the 2005/06 budget, electing a new Speaker, and addressing other legislative issues. Parliament did not, however, address the impeachment procedure bill that had been tabled before the they temporarily adjourned on June 23 (Reftel C). They are expected to bring the procedural bill back up at their next sitting in September, though the likelihood of an actual impeachment motion being proposed in the future remains unclear. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Member of Parliament Louis Chimango sat for the first time as Speaker on Monday July 18, after being unanimously elected to the position. Chimango is a member of the opposition Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and has been a Parliamentarian since 1978. Educated in the U.K., Chimango has previously served as Minister of Health, Minister of Finance, and Minister of Education and Culture among other roles. He was a close friend of the late Hastings Banda, and is well respected by most MPs. (COMMENT) Post believes Chimango will not seek reelection, and this will be his last role in government.

[1](#)3. (U) Parliament spent the week of July 18 addressing legislative bills centered on updating Malawi's taxation and procurement laws, bringing them in line with international standards. For example, they passed a bill changing the name of the sales tax to "Value Added Tax". The impeachment procedures bill was also referred back to the legislative affairs committee of Parliament. It is expected to be brought up at the next session of Parliament in September.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment: Parliament will likely pass the bill putting in place the Presidential and Vice-presidential impeachment procedures when they next meet. The procedural bill only needs a simple majority to pass, which the opposition parties should easily muster. However, a motion to then actually impeach the President is a different issue, and seems unlikely to pass even if it were put forward. Constitutionally, a/n impeachment motion would require two-thirds majority in Parliament, which it is fairly clear the opposition cannot get (Reftel B). Without enough support in Parliament, the specter of an impeachment bill might die a natural death.

CLOUD